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## The Conception of Nationalism in Elementary School Children of North Dakota

Robert A. Wheeler

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THE CONCEPTION OF NATIONALISM IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
CHILDREN OF NORTH DAKOTA

by

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Bachelor of Science, Mayville State College 1955  
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A Dissertation  
Submitted to the Faculty  
of the  
University of North Dakota  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Education

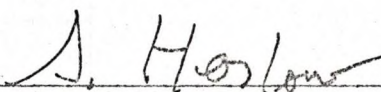
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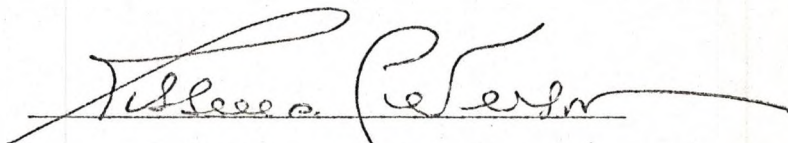
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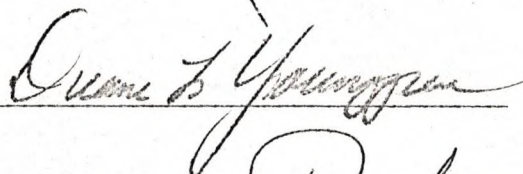
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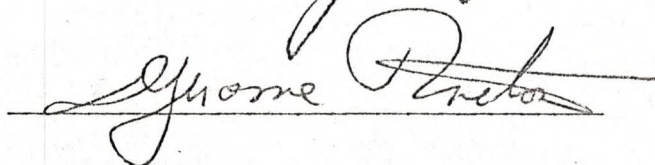


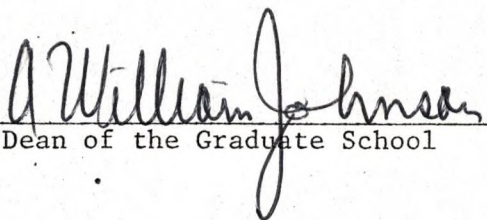
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## ABSTRACT

The major purpose of this study was to determine when children can internalize concepts concerning home, state, and nation.

Educators and psychologists have not in the past worked in harmony as new curricula and methodologies have been developed. It was the intent of this research to provide statistical data and verbal comparisons on selected research questions to determine the effect of children's chronological age on the ability to generalize social studies concepts.

The following research questions were investigated:

1. Do North Dakota elementary students differ from Swiss Children investigated by Piaget in their concept of nation?
2. Do North Dakota elementary students develop an understanding of nationalism in a predictable pattern?
3. Do North Dakota elementary students differ in their nationalistic conception from east to west and from north to south within North Dakota?
4. Do North Dakota elementary students from rural communities differ from urban communities in their concept of nationalism?
5. Do North Dakota elementary students from homogeneous ethnic communities differ from heterogeneous ethnic communities in their concept of nationalism?



The research population used in this investigation consisted of stratified randomly selected students in grades one through six from six regions of North Dakota. Two students per grade were selected from each school. Two rural and one urban community were selected for each of the six regions. Four homogeneous ethnic communities, one of which was also included in the random selection, were included and two students per grade were also selected from these schools. The total population used in the study was 244.

All students participating in the study were administered a questionnaire constructed from a model used by Piaget and Weil (1951) modified to the North Dakota situation. The questionnaire was administered on a one to one basis with verbal answers which were tape recorded.

The basic statistical design utilized in the study was a one way analysis of variance.

The summary of the findings are as follows:

1. There was no significant difference between North Dakota students in 1969 and Swiss students in the 1940's in the conception of nationalism.

2. In consideration of scores on the total questionnaire North Dakota students do conceive an understanding of nationalism following a predictable pattern beyond the .001 level of significance.

3. There was no significant difference in nationalistic conception between students living in the Red River Valley, The Drift Prairie or the Missouri Plateau.

4. There was no significant difference in nationalistic conception between urban and rural North Dakota students.

5. In the comparison of students from Slavic, German, Scandinavian, and Icelandic communities to students from the other eighteen communities in the study there was no significant difference between groups.

### Conclusions

1. In learning social studies concepts young children will be more successful if the concepts are concrete and consider local situations.

2. The pressure of the multi-media in its many variations does not influence a child's ability to learn concepts until he has the necessary maturity.

3. At least in geographic and sociological portions of the social studies curriculum concrete experiences are important in concept formation.

4. Location, community size, and ethnic origins are not factors that would require special curricula or methodologies in order for students to conceive an understanding of nationalism.

5. It would be difficult for students to work with curricula which introduced abstract social studies concepts below the fourth grade or about ten years of age.



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The major purpose of this study was to determine when children can internalize concepts concerning home, state and nation. Schools are not meeting their responsibility to the elementary school child if they do not consider the rate and extent to which a child is able to conceptualize in the planning of new curricula. According to Joyce (1965) and Douglas (1967) schools may be increasing the problem of children's ability to cope with social studies curricula if concepts beyond their ability are presented at a given grade level.

Joyce (1965) emphasized that the trend has been to accelerate learning in new curricula in all subject areas. The common strategy in this acceleration has been to move subject content to lower grade levels. Consequently students are confronted with more difficult material. This becomes a problem in the social studies where the curriculum change has been two-fold: First, according to Ragan and McAulay (1964), a change has occurred from the separate two-discipline approach (history, geography), to a fused multi-discipline (history, geography, economics, anthropology, civics, and sociology) approach. Second, according to Kaltsounis (1964), Joyce (1965), and Douglas (1967), a change has occurred from a chronological order study (starting from some predetermined starting point to a pre-determined ending) to a topical arrangement employing critical thinking and problem solving.

The broad base is only one of the problems in social studies teaching. According to Taba (1967) the traditional teaching of social studies has emphasized descriptive facts, which are not readily retained. The results of the multiple of facts available and the time required to assimilate facts makes the method inefficient.

Not only are social studies curricula plagued with the problem of vast amounts of material to be investigated or learned by the elementary school child but this material is also subject to constant change. The content material for social studies is changing so fast that most material is outdated by the time it is published. Even current material may have a variety of interpretations dependent on how it is portrayed. In the past, social studies has traditionally presented only one interpretation of social events. New social studies curricula investigate a number of interpretations of each social event.

A number of educators including Sigel (1964), Bruner (1966), and Taba (1967) agree, based on the theories of Piaget, a child's ability to learn beyond the animal connotation of learning, is the result of maturity. Accepting this basic research, the curriculum in social studies must be carefully structured to present at a given chronological age material that children are mature enough to meaningfully learn.

According to Piaget (Joyce, 1965) the intellectual structures in advancing stages of sophistication are based on chronological age. They are as follows: From age four to the age of eight the child is generally able to reason only particular cases dealing with very concrete examples. The child is usually not able to carry on a generalized



argument. The child has trouble reasoning from the point of view of another person. The child feels no need for logical examination of ideas. From the age of eight to eleven, a child changes in his ability to generalize but only from concrete cases. He is better able to see another's point of view, but is not able to role play. A child is also willing to subject some of his ideas to logical examination. After the age of eleven, the child begins to assume the viewpoint of others and to reason from another's belief. Thus, a child is now capable of role playing. At about this age a child's schemata are sufficiently developed to enable him to carry on formal abstract reasoning. A child is now willing to subject his social studies ideas to logical examination.

Piaget and Weil (1951) working with Swiss children, investigated the cognitive processes involved in social studies. Their findings document the importance of the chronological age factor in the ability of children to conceive nationalism. Piaget and Weil found that a child's inclination toward nationalism started as a slow and laborious process in which the child developed a faculty for cognitive and affective integration. This was necessary before the child could develop an awareness of homeland and the homeland of others. This faculty was found to be far more complex than would appear on first consideration. According to Piaget and Weil (1951, p. 562):

Before a child attains a cognitive and affective awareness of his own country, the child must make considerable effort toward decentralization, or broadening his own centers of interest (town, canton, etc.) and toward integration of his impressions (with surroundings other than his own) in the course of which he acquires an understanding of countries and points of view different from his own.



The above complex changes that a child must make in order to conceive his country in the correct perspective require both maturity and experience according to Piaget and Weil. The present research is an attempt to complement the research of Piaget and Weil (1951) in relationship to the learning of home and homeland by North Dakota elementary school students.

### Significance of the Study

The Swiss study of Piaget and Weil (1951) gave substantial support of Swiss children's ability to generalize concepts concerning home, homeland, and nation-state given sufficient maturity. What effects have the passage of time, different culture, and local setting had on the theories proposed by Piaget and Weil? To the knowledge of the present researcher the Piaget and Weil study has not been duplicated in the United States or any other country.

The questions which give purpose to the present study are as follows: (1) Switzerland is a very small compact country with many contacts with surrounding countries and foreign people. North Dakota lies near the center of a very large country and has limited contact with other countries or foreign people (at least foreign people who speak a different language). Does the proximity of other countries and other people give Swiss children experiences which would allow them to conceive home, homeland, and nation differently than more isolated North Dakota students? (2) A time span of two decades has had a significant difference on experiences that children have. Children at the present time do considerably more traveling than did children twenty years ago at the close of World War II. Travel



is an experience that will influence concept formation and generalization in social studies according to Harrison and Solomon (1964). (3) The Swiss study by Piaget was completed prior to the influences of multi-media. What has been the effect of television and the increase in the scope and availability of school oriented newspapers, travelogs, filmstrips, and pictures? (4) The present western world population is living in a political situation of soft boundaries, while the Swiss students investigated by Piaget and Weil lived under hard political boundary conditions. Has the decrease in significance of national boundaries as a barrier changed the nationalistic allegiance of children.

#### Statement of the Problem

When can children internalize concepts concerning home, state, and nation? Is it possible to predict this occurrence?

#### Questions to be Investigated

1. Do North Dakota elementary students differ from Swiss children investigated by Piaget in their concept of nation?
2. Do North Dakota elementary students develop an understanding of nationalism in a predictable pattern?
3. Do North Dakota elementary students differ in their nationalistic conception from east to west and from north to south within North Dakota?
4. Do North Dakota elementary students from rural communities differ from urban communities in their concept of nationalism?

5. Do North Dakota elementary students from homogeneous ethnic communities differ from heterogeneous ethnic communities in their concept of nationalism?

#### Delimitation of the Problem

This study was conducted within the framework of the following delimitations:

1. The study was concerned with 244 randomly selected students enrolled in grades one through six in randomly selected North Dakota classrooms.
2. Only students in school systems offering a twelve year program were considered.
3. Only the factors measured by the instrument developed for this study were included.

#### Limitations of the Problem

The study was conducted under the following limitations:

1. It was assumed that the instrument used had sufficient reliability and validity for the purpose of this study.
2. It was assumed that the students from schools in communities over 3,000 were urban in orientation and that students in communities under 3,000 were rural in orientation.
3. It was assumed that in each area of the questionnaire a positive or zero value could be placed on each answer to determine if the student understood the concept being questioned.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The implications of the present study are that certain curricula would be more desirable for the teaching or learning of social studies concepts. In the following review of literature an attempt will be made to explore the principles of learning investigated by Piaget and Weil (1951) and determine to what extent their findings are supported by other researchers. Literature concerning concept formation and generalization is included. Recent literature of social scientists concerning curricula and learning (methodologies) in the elementary school is presented.

Each elementary child brings to social studies a different set of experiences. The challenge to the social studies teacher and those who assist him with curriculum is to accurately assess the cognitive level and common experiential background of his students and in light of these findings create a stimulating learning environment. The research of Piaget (1950) and Peel (1961) provide evidence that children's learning abilities develop by stages.

#### The Process of Concept Formation and Generalization

The literature reported in this portion of the chapter is divided into two broad psychological areas: (1) Process studies which essentially deal with the development of conceptualization.

(2) Status studies which were concerned primarily with assessing children's knowledge of certain ideas or concepts at a particular time.

Hull (1920), Heidebreder (1948, 1949), and Smoke (1932, 1935) found that children's concept formation follows certain principles. First, development of concepts is facilitated by progressing from simple to complex. Concepts of concrete objects form prior to those of spatial relationships. Second, a combination of presentations of abstractions coupled with concrete examples produces greater efficiency in learning than either method alone. Thirdly, concepts could be possessed by subjects even though they could not be verbalized. Fourth, concepts usually develop gradually with trial and error playing an important role in the learning process.

Possibly the most systematic schemata of conceptual development was that of Piaget (1950). Piaget's stages are combined into broader phases of autism and egocentrism. Piaget (1950, 1957) lists the stages as follows: (1) Sensor-motor, intelligence, reflexes, grasping and sucking are the earliest perceptual motor schemata (Birth to 18 months). (2) Preconceptual thought. The schemata to make-believe play becomes real symbols when disassociated from action with one's own body. This representative imitation coincides with speech, marking the growth of general symbolic function; which encompasses symbolic play, imaginal representation, and verbal thought (18 months to 4 years). (3) Intuitive thought. The use of representations for reasoning is limited by perceptia dominance, when faced with the problem of logically integrating several aspects of the same object or the same aspect of different objects, a child



cannot disregard that aspect which is perceptually obtrusive (4 to 7 years). (4) Concrete operation. In contrast to common usage concrete operations are actions that have become abstract. They are manipulations in thought based on inductive abstractions from below which overcome the intuitive dependency on actions, contents, and situations (8 to 11 years). (5) Formal thought. The child at this stage is able to perform operations upon operations. It is a level of abstraction at which reflective reasoning and formal logical thinking become possible (12 years on).

Though Piaget has become criticized by experimental psychologists because of inappropriate methodology, his work has been used as a theoretical framework by many researchers. Piaget's role has been stated by Dennis (1951, p. 161) a vehement critic, in these words: "Piaget can neither prove nor disapprove his hypothesis, that must be done by others. Researchers return to Piaget for ideas, not statistics."

In her work with elementary school children of grades three through eight, Deutsche (1937) was unable to verify Piaget's hypothesis that reasoning develops by stages. Russell (1940) and Russell and Dennis (1939) tested Piaget's statement identifying the animistic phase in conceptual development. Their findings indicated that while it was possible to generally classify children's responses into an animistic phase, there was considerable variation in the type of response apparent between chronological age levels as well as mental age levels. The preceding researchers were unable to confirm Piaget's age ranges.



Fiefel and Lorge (1950) revealed that differences in ability to conceptualize were highly related to chronological age and found significant differences were established between the qualitative responses given by younger children against those of older children. Younger children perceive words of concrete ideas and emphasize their isolated or particular aspects, whereas older children stress the abstract (or class) features of the word meaning.

Deutsche (1937) found that the kinds of concepts children develop were limited by the kinds of experiences made available to them.

This is supported by Ausubel (1963), who emphasized that young children have rather limited conceptions of the world and are able to make only concrete statements concerning even their own home community, while older children are able to make more abstract statements concerning the area in which they live. This ability is the result of their being aware of their country longer and having seen more of it. Therefore, the older children are able to conceive in the correct perspective a larger view of their homeland.

To define how different experiences affect the learning of social studies concepts, consider a socioeconomic situation which causes children to react differently. Ausubel (1963) and Festinger (1963) found that poor children tend to visualize coins to be larger than actual size while rich children tend to visualize coins as being smaller than actual size. Ausubel (1963) emphasized that this type of activity or reaction also provided somewhat of an answer as to the perception of younger children in relation to perception of older children.



Peel (1961) found that it was not possible to use Piaget's chronological age divisions of development working with English children. Over a long period of time and research, Peel (1961) found that many exceptions to Piaget's eight to eleven year old period of concrete operations. Peel found children often reaching this stage prior to the age of eight or not reaching this stage by the age of eleven. Peel found that using mental age rather than chronological age to be more appropriate for English children. Saltz and Sigel (1967) found Piaget's age divisions for concept development between the child's mental age and chronological age. The above studies would indicate that chronological age alone cannot define the age divisions stated by Piaget. It is necessary to consider the experiences and mental maturity of the children.

A number of studies pertaining to the process of conceptualization reinforce and extend the findings of those works already cited. Among these are the investigations of Fisher (1961), English (1922), Humphrey (1940), Tyler (1939), Buhler (1930) and Werner and Kaplan (1950). These investigations and those discussed earlier have derived the following conclusions: (1) Buhler (1930), Curti (1950), and Piaget (1950) state evidence exists that children proceed through developmental stages in conceptualization. (2) Heidbreder (1928), Piaget (1929), and Werner (1948) report that concept development appears to move along a continuum from simple to complex, from concrete to abstract, from undifferentiated to differentiated, from diffused to organized, and from egocentric to sociocentric. (3) Werner (1948) found that concepts are more readily formed from meaningful than

unrelated material. (4) Heidbreder (1928), Welch (1947) and Werner (1948) found that chronological age was an important factor in the growth of conceptualization.

Though the psychological studies cited typically have been carried out in a laboratory removed from the reality of the classroom, the developmental principles ascertained have offered much to the organization of learning experiences and stimulation of further research.

Status studies assess children's knowledge of certain ideas or concepts at a given time. Status studies are specific and usually consider only one discipline area and are not a measure of general knowledge. As this research is concerned with the learning of social studies by children in the elementary school, for this review of literature only status studies concerning social studies were chosen.

Eskridge (1939) surveyed the knowledge that fourth, fifth, and sixth grade children possessed about selected geographical terms. He found many misconceptions and a wide range of responses. Eskridge stated that there were strong indications that knowledge of geography is related to such factors as the amount and kind of experiences children have had, the level of achievement in geography, sex and verbal ability. Among Eskridge's conclusions relative to the growth of geographical concepts were that learning is affected by (1) different meanings children can attach to a concept, (2) growth in general information and (3) reduction of errors or misconcepts.

A survey completed by Piaget and Weil (1951) indicated that young children, below the age of five, have little inclination toward



nationalism. The process of developing nationalism, as explained by Piaget and Weil, starts about the age of five and continues to about the age of eleven. The Piaget and Weil study emphasized that the young child can only begin to understand homeland with assumptions arising out of his own special surroundings and activities. These very close associations and limited activities are actually stumbling blocks to understanding larger spatial areas.

Piaget and Weil (1951) divided their study of chronological spatial development of children into three age groups, five to seven years, seven to ten years, and ten to eleven years of age and into three conceptual divisions, cognitive and affective ideas of homeland, cognitive ideas of other countries and cognitive ideas of other people. Piaget and Weil's observations are as follows: (1) Swiss children, ages five to seven, understood their relationship to home city but not to Switzerland. The children of this age group did not have knowledge in depth of other countries but were aware of other countries. All people who lived in different places were foreigners and the children themselves could not become foreigners. (2) Swiss children, ages seven to nine, have an understanding of the relationship of themselves to their city and country but have the opinion that they can only belong to the city or the country at a given time. The children of this age group have placed their affective feeling with Switzerland but have limited reasons why they made this choice. In reciprocity with other people this age group is not willing to be a foreigner himself. (3) Swiss children, ten to twelve years, have the correct cognitive and affective understanding of home. They are also able to understand other countries and other people.

Sigel's (1964) findings were similar to Piaget and Weil except his research also included a study of government. Sigel raised the age of understanding to the age of sixteen. Peel (1961) studied English children in an attempt to substantiate the findings of Piaget. Peel concluded that Piaget's findings were correct if you change chronological age to mental age.

To Piaget (1929), Peel (1961) and Sigel (1964), this is an indication that if children must generalize the unknown, meaning what they do not understand, they must have maturity of at least eleven years, either chronological or mental age.

#### The Position of Social Scientists

The past ten years have generated a voluminous amount of literature from leaders in the discipline of social studies. Much of the research and suggested change in the disciplines of social science has been the result of social studies becoming a part of the National Defense Education Act of 1958 as amended. According to Ploghoft (1965) many schools throughout the nation entered the 1960's considering the social studies programs introduced in the period from 1916-1918 to be adequate to meet their curriculum needs in social studies. Thus with the long period of limited activity social studies leaders found themselves in the early 1960's with money available to fund programs to formulate and instigate change but had only the work of Taba et al. (1964) and a few other published researchers from which to draw material. To meet the very drastic need for research more than forty long range programs, most of which were to continue from five to ten years, were established throughout the United States from 1963 through



1965. By the late 1960's nearly every majority university which was involved in the training of teachers had some type of research either planned or in operation dealing with some phase of social studies. Since the majority of these projects are still in operation or have just been completed only a limited amount of complete research data has been released.

Bruner (1966) wrote that children are able to learn and generalize any concept if it was taught using the inductive science methods of research. Weaver (1965) credits Bruner (1964) and Taba et al., (1964) with the introduction of modern research in social studies. But Weaver found the position made by Bruner to be false in the learning abilities of primary children. Weaver's research found primary children are limited to concepts which are concrete. Mugge (1968), a social scientist, also disagrees with psychologist Bruner (1966) as to how children learn social studies concepts. Mugge found that social studies concepts dealing with near and far, now and then are most difficult for children to internalize. Mugge sums up her position on learning social studies with the statement that a child can only internalize a question that he may ask himself. Harrison and Solomon (1964) and Mugge (1968) found that economic concepts were very difficult for primary students to understand; a car for example could cost from six cents to over a million dollars, both amounts given with the same verbal expression. The average child of this age considers a little available money good but has little interest beyond this consideration.

Not only do children appear to have age limitations as to what concepts they are capable of internalizing but not all students

of the same age have the same abilities. Fraenkel (1968) emphasized that each student was an individual and each required a different learning experience. Each child, in order to complete his social studies learning, must have many experiences but all need not have these experiences at the same age. All social studies concepts cannot be learned in isolation; many concepts require group interaction. Fraenkel also emphasized that, for teaching, social studies concepts need to be written out in detail.

Harrison and Solomon (1964) found that while students in grades 1-3 working with pictures and maps could generate even abstract concepts, they could not go into depth and did not grow in ability during this three year period in dealing with abstractions. Harrison and Solomon found that students in grades 1-3 seemed to know more about the far past than the recent past. They know that Washington was older than Lincoln but not that grandmother was older than mother.

Some social scientists have divided the ability of elementary students to learn social studies concepts into two age groups. Cordier (1968) has defined age generalities for the learning of social studies as follows: (1) From the age of six to eight the child is able to follow directions either working alone or in groups. The child can also use reference books, read maps, and pictures for concrete information with which to solve social studies problems. (2) Between the age of nine and twelve the child will gain the ability to use references with either concrete or abstract material. Cordier (1968), Mugge (1968), and Estvan (1969) emphasize that social studies teaching should use inquiry, induction, deduction, and creative thinking to approach and



solve investigative social studies questions. They also emphasize that social studies curricula need to be structured to the extent that learning of concepts will be sequential.

The following two studies emphasize the significance of chronological age and progression from concrete to abstract in the understanding of social studies concepts. Arnsdorf (1967), in testing student's ability to comprehend written social studies material, paired two groups of students with equal abilities as measured by tests. One group of students, grades 4-6, were given regular teacher directed basic text material concerned with physical and climatic characteristics of the United States. This group became the control group. The second group was given a prepared text in which nearly all of the generalizations normally found in a fifth grade social studies text were changed to concrete facts. In fact, the text for the control group was reduced to concrete facts. The experimental group was also taught in a teacher directed classroom. Both groups were given the same two open ended no time limit tests. The test results indicated that chronological age was a factor in both groups; sixth graders had better results than fifth graders, and fifth graders fared better than fourth graders. The students using the text with only concrete facts performed better than the standard text students to the .001 level. When comparing only the results on the climatic learning the students using the concrete material had an even more pronounced gain over their standard text equals. Arnsdorf (1967) also found that the students using concrete material showed more curiosity toward the material and spent more of their free time studying social studies.



Hunkins and Shapiro (1967) tested the value of inductive questioning and creative thinking over traditional classroom procedure. Hunkins and Shapiro paired students groups one of which was traditional and the other experimental. The experimental group was introduced to inductive reasoning and creative thinking. Both groups were taught and tested on similar material. The two groups were given the same open ended, no time limit test. The experimental, inductive, creative thinking group showed improvement in knowledge over the traditional group significant to the .001 level. In agreement with Arnsdorf (1967), Hunkins and Shapiro (1967) found that the experimental students were more curious and spent more of their own time studying social studies.

Not all social scientists agree with the developmental psychologist that maturity is a factor in learning concepts. Leif (1968) is a critic of the psychologists and social scientists who propose maturity to be a factor in the learning of social studies concepts. She emphasizes that it is not the thought process which changes with maturity but the ability to give verbal responses.

To increase the problem of what to teach when in elementary social studies, Bradley (1968) emphasized that the fact that the child has the ability to work with a given set of concepts does not insure that this is the most appropriate time to present these concepts. He also indicated that educators underestimate the ability of children to learn. Some social scientists present an answer to the social studies curriculum problem that may be a satisfactory



solution to both the traditionalists and the developmentalists. Harrison and Solomon (1965) and Kaltsounis (1969) were in agreement with Piaget (1950) and others who considered maturity to be a factor in learning social studies concepts. Kaltsounis takes the stand that at present children know most of the social studies concepts prior to being presented the social studies material. The reason for this is the fact that social studies has been primarily survey. Kaltsounis emphasizes that there is a danger of going beyond the ability of children to learn when programs include the depth and phenomena of the social studies concepts as a part of the course work. Harrison and Solomon emphasize that even though a child may not be capable of comprehending concepts in depth to satisfy their natural curiosity, they should be allowed to investigate social studies in breadth but open ended so that they will, with maturity, be able to return many times to the same topics. Kaltsounis and Harrison and Solomon agree that it is equally important to measure a child in the area of affective variables as well as cognitive variables. They state that the problem with most teachers of social studies is that they are more interested in measuring cognitive learning than in changing student attitudes. At least one social scientist has added another dimension as to considerations which are necessary when curricula are planned. Sloan (1966) emphasized that social studies, at least in the lower elementary school, were in part another reading course as assimilation of many social studies concepts was the result of student reading. Sloan stated that if reading programs for this age group were best presented as ungraded material then social studies should also



be ungraded and be at a comparable reading level. A student's reading level would be similar in both social studies and reading classes. Sloan also emphasized the need for affective evaluation as well as cognitive evaluation.

Elementary students have provided educators with some problems in planning of current social studies, according to at least two authors. Harrison and Solomon (1964) state that young children in grades 1-3 have a very high interest in spatial studies, (geography) and very current social problems, local, national, and international. They emphasize that children gain considerable knowledge from personal travel as well as the mass media. In grades 4-6 social studies is in a nebulous position with students, not preferred over other subjects but not less desired either.

Jarolimek (1966) reported that the present curricula are so narrow that the students know much of the material prior to study. Jarolimek emphasized that the depth of the course material should be increased, not the breadth. He also emphasized that loose word structure in text material causes misconceptions which makes it necessary to reorientate children to the correct meaning of the concept.

A number of studies have outlined the position and tasks of the elementary teacher in the new social studies curricula. McAulay (1968) states the criterion for elementary social studies as follows: (1) Does the social studies program focus on the child? (2) Does the program allow for adjustment to different groups? (3) Does the program use current problems which are understandable to the child?



(4) Is the proposed program objective? (5) Does the program help the child to form multiple loyalties?

McFarren (1969) states that if teachers are to be successful in the teaching of new social studies they must be committed to the following: (1) The child will learn social studies by inquiry, discovery, and/or reflective thinking. (2) In using inquiry as a method of learning, subject matter must be limited in breadth and expanded in depth. (3) A teacher must be prepared to accept more than one possible answer or solution. (4) Affective learning and cognitive learning are of equal value. A child must be able and allowed to defend his positions. (5) The course work must be structured to give both teacher and student an opportunity to develop their research. (6) Course work from the different disciplines must be integrated and history must step down from the position of being the focus of social studies. (7) All students are individuals. (8) Class length and classroom fixtures must be flexible. (9) Both teacher and student must be more involved in planning. (10) The teacher must now take the role of a guide, helper, and fellow researcher with the students. The teacher should not take the position of a know-it-all. Bozeli (1968) takes a position similar to McFarren (1969) except that his list is less complete and detailed.

Thomas (1969) emphasizes that the teacher must analyze the following questions in developing a social studies program. What does the student bring to the program? What does the teacher want the student to achieve in the program? What does the student want from the program? After analyzing these questions the teacher is

in the position to develop an individual program for each student. Learning is personal but some social studies concepts can only be rationalized with group interaction.

Michaelis (1970) and Crabtree (1966) state that what is needed in social studies is not an inquiry approach, or a conceptual approach. Inquiry, provides the modes and processes, the conceptual process provides the tools, link these together and using significant settings, topics, issues, themes, and problems, all social studies questions may be answered. Inquiry modes and processes are both analytic and integrative.

Not all social scientists have accepted the new social studies curricula and methodologies in total. Svaboda (1970) stated that social studies curricula should be thematic in approach and be an integral part of the total school curriculum with a set time block and a priority level for each theme.

Some social scientists are very disappointed with the changes in social studies during the past ten years.

Ploghoft (1965) indicated that the period from 1955-1965 was poorly handled in elementary social studies. More disciplines were added to the social studies curriculum without leadership as to the methodology of presenting this expanded curriculum. Ploghoft (1965) was also concerned with the fact that this subject area leadership in social studies was self appointed and often disagreed with each other even to the definition of social studies. Ploghoft emphasized that the leadership must take a stand and determine at least in general what shall be taught in social studies and at what age the child



should be expected to have a need to know the many social studies concepts.

Gross (1965) emphasized that in some respects social studies had become a many headed dragon. He stated that new curriculum had been added without changing methodology. Gross stated that the present curriculum can depend less and less on the traditional past and there is a need for new ideas and methodologies. Social studies can no longer be only a familiar link to the past.

Research relating to the concepts of home, community, and nation that children can learn at a given chronological age is glaringly absent. Therefore, it was impossible to cite studies pertaining to the major problem of this study, with the exception of Piaget and Weil (1951).

#### Summary

Psychologists in general are in agreement that children progress through cognitive stages in their ability to learn and work with social studies concepts.

Process and status studies have provided evidence that young children are able to formulate and work in depth only with concrete facts. Children in the middle grades age 8-11 have the ability to conceive and use facts which are both concrete and abstract. But children of this age level are limited to relating or generalizing an abstract concept only if it can be compared to a concrete concept. Above the age of ten, children gain the ability to formulate and generalize abstract concepts. The child now has the ability to generalize concepts from abstract to abstract. The ability to subject

personal ideas to subjective analysis of others does not appear until the age of eight. The ability of a child to rationalize from the position of another person does not develop until the age of eleven.

Piaget and Weil (1951) emphasize that a child does not develop a true understanding of nationalism until about the age of eleven.

The social scientist completed little research which was implemented into the elementary school program from 1918 through the 1950's.

The modern research by social scientists has predominately investigated curricula and methodologies which would enable the elementary teacher to effectively teach the expanded elementary social studies curriculum.

Though the social scientist has been concerned with curricula and methodologies many of the studies indicate a relationship to the results of the psychologists. From the social science research the child's ability to learn social studies concepts is determined by chronological age and personal experience. When social studies concepts are removed from the concrete evidence of the local area the concepts become more abstract. Students will require more maturity and/or experiences in order to comprehend these concepts.

Considering the research of both the psychologist and social scientists young children would be most aware of concepts which involve their local area. With increased maturity children would be capable of expanding the breadth and complexity of social studies concepts under consideration. Children in the upper grades of elementary school should have maturity sufficient to grasp abstract



concepts as comparison of countries or other people even though they have not seen the people or visited the country.

With the exception of the Piaget and Weil (1951) research, no studies either in social studies or psychology have been reported considering spatial concepts of nation. No previous studies have been completed considering chronological age and the ability of midwestern United States children to conceive social studies concepts.

## CHAPTER III

### DESIGN OF THE STUDY

#### Sources of Data

The data used in this study was collected during October and November, 1969. The study involved twenty-one schools and 244 elementary school students from grades one through six. All of the students were administered a prepared questionnaire constructed to correspond to their grade level.

#### General Procedure

The general procedure followed in the collection of the data was as follows:

1. The state of North Dakota was divided into six predetermined regions, dividing the state into nearly equal halves north to south and into three physiographic regions east to west.
2. Only grade placement and chronological age were taken into consideration as to which level of the questionnaire would be administered to the student.
3. The questionnaire was given on an individual basis with the questions read to the children and their verbal response recorded on tape, thus students were



forced to give first thought answers. The administration of the questionnaire does not give time or encourage students to take time to study and select alternative answers. The questionnaire does not present questions in an empirical order which would encourage students to build on answers given in previous questions. The questionnaire was used in three forms.

See Appendix A.

4. No students were rejected from the study because of lack of cooperation with the researcher.

#### Instrument

The instrument administered to the subjects of this research was a questionnaire used by Piaget and Weil (1951) during the late 1940's in Geneva, Switzerland, which was revised to be compatible to the North Dakota scene by the present researcher. See Appendix A and B. All of the questions used by Piaget and Weil were incorporated into the present study. The questions posed by Piaget and Weil (1951) which pertained to Swiss settings were altered to fit North Dakota. In reconstruction, care was taken not to change the conceptual meaning of the questions as Piaget and Weil had used them. See Appendix B. The questions were presented to elementary students in North Dakota in the same order as Piaget and Weil (1951) presented the questions to Swiss children.

The questionnaire was divided into four basic stages measuring the understanding of concepts concerned with home, homeland, and nation-state as follows:

- I. Cognitive and Affective Development of the Idea of Homeland:
  - a. Cognate idea of homeland
  - b. Cognate ideas of hometown and state
  - c. Cognate relationship of hometown and nation
  - d. Affective idea of homeland
- II. The Reaction of Children Toward Countries Other Than Their Own:
  - a. Reaction to other countries
  - b. Relationship of other people and other countries
- III. Cognitive and Affective Understanding of Others:
  - a. What is a foreigner?
  - b. Who is a foreigner?
  - c. How does one become a foreigner?
- IV. Affective Motivation Toward Spatial Discrimination
  - a. What country would you choose to live in?
  - b. What country would you choose for a foreign student to live in?

From the review of the literature concerning this questionnaire, Piaget has only administered his questionnaire to about two hundred children from the age of five to twelve plus in Geneva, Switzerland. There is no evidence to indicate that this questionnaire has been used by another researcher. To the knowledge of the present researcher there has been no effort made to devise a scale of achievement for this questionnaire. The conclusions drawn by Piaget were based on the answer or answers given by students questioned. Piaget and Weil



(1951) supported their conclusions by including selected student interviews in their article. A similar procedure will be used in this research.

### Research Population

As a result of the questions to be investigated by this research the population selected was a stratified random sample of North Dakota elementary students. The state of North Dakota was divided into three east to west regions along normal physiographic divisions, the Red River Valley, the Drift Prairie, and the Missouri Plateau. Each region was also divided into a northern and southern portion by the 48th parallel. Thus for purposes of selecting a research population the state was divided into six regions. Within each region all communities offering at least a twelve year school program were designated as either rural or urban, 3,000 population was the criterion, and each community was placed in respective columns. Using a list of random numbers (Edwards, 1967) two rural and one urban community were selected from each region of the state. See Appendix C.

In addition to the stratified random sample, four communities with nearly pure single ethnic origins were preselected; one Icelandic, one Germanic, one Norwegian, and one Slavic. The purpose was to determine whether students from communities with a single ethnic origin perceived nationalism differently than students from heterogeneous communities. The Slavic community was also selected for inclusion in the stratified random sample.

Using the table of random numbers twelve students were selected from each elementary school, two students from each grade. Because three of the urban elementary schools did not have the sixth grade included in the elementary program, the research population was reduced by six sixth graders. A failure of the audio taping process caused a loss of a fifth and a sixth grader from the rural population. Thus the total research population consisted of 244 elementary students from twenty-one different schools in six regions of North Dakota. The randomly selected population from the single ethnic communities was two students from each grade for a total of twelve students per school.

This study was an investigation of the conception of nation, state, and home community at different chronological ages. No effort was made to balance the number of boys and girls; both were questioned as they were randomly selected. One hundred and nineteen boys and one hundred twenty five girls were questioned.

#### Treatment of the Data

The responses of North Dakota elementary students studied in this investigation were compared to the responses of Swiss elementary students studied by Piaget and Weil (1951) with a qualitative analysis. What the North Dakota student told this researcher in response to the questionnaire has been qualitatively compared with what the Swiss child told Piaget and Weil (1951).

For each of the three age levels, (six to eight years of age, nine to ten years of age, and eleven to twelve years of age), the questionnaire was divided into four subdivisions as follows: Cognitive aspects of home and nation; affective aspects of nation, cognitive



aspects of other countries and other people; and affective motivation toward spatial discrimination. A varying number of questions were asked in each subdivision of the questionnaire but the same questions were asked of all students in a given age group unless they could not answer preceding questions which were interrelated. Each question was given a point value, as the number of questions varied between age groups, the weighting of each question varied between age groups to give equal possible total point value to every questionnaire and to every subdivision of the questionnaire. To determine the mean of each subdivision all the scores, which could range from a possible 12 to a possible 624, for each age group were averaged. The responses from North Dakota students to be compared with the responses of Piaget and Weil's (1951) Swiss children was determined by the mean of each subdivision for each age group, not the mean of the total score of the questionnaire. No attempt was made to determine the mean for each question. Three or four students who received mean scores for a subdivision of the questionnaire represented the mean of the North Dakota students of that age group. Care was taken to select only those papers which were representative of the North Dakota age group. From the reported data it was possible to determine that Piaget and Weil (1951) did consider responses only to subdivisions of the questionnaire, not to individual questions.

The students' concepts of homeland were compared on a grade to grade level comparison within each region and between regions, rural to rural, rural to urban, and urban to urban, within North Dakota. The basic statistical design utilized in the study was an analysis of variance.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

#### Question One

Do North Dakota elementary students differ from Swiss Children investigated by Piaget in their concept of nation? The responses of North Dakota elementary students studied in this investigation are compared to the responses of Swiss elementary students studied by Piaget and Weil (1951) using a qualitative analysis.

For each of the three age levels, six to eight years of age, eight to ten years of age, and ten to twelve years of age, the questionnaire was divided into four subdivisions as follows: (1) Cognitive aspects of home, state, and nation (2) Affective aspects of nation (3) Cognitive aspects of other countries and knowledge of other people (4) Affective motivation toward spatial discrimination. A varying number of questions were asked in each subdivision of the questionnaire but the same question concepts were asked of all students in a given age group unless a student ceased to respond. This differs from the procedure of Piaget and Weil who did not use standard questions for each student within a given age group. To determine the mean score on the questionnaire, presented to North Dakota students, in total and for each subtest, all the scores in a given



age group were averaged in total and for each subtest. The students chosen to be compared with the responses of Swiss students studied by Piaget and Weil (1951) were determined by the mean score on each subtest and was not based on the mean of each question or on the mean of the total questionnaire.

The data are presented in table format, with a brief introduction to each subtest of the questionnaire. Following the tables for the three age groups in each subtest a discussion of the tables is presented giving the results of the comparison.

The results of subtest (1) on cognitive aspects of home, state, and nation are presented in Tables 1 through 3 in a verbal format.

Table 1 is a comparison of North Dakota elementary students and Swiss students ages six through eight. Table 2 is a comparison of North Dakota elementary students and Swiss students ages eight through ten. Table 3 is a comparison of North Dakota and Swiss students ages ten through twelve.

There is some difficulty in making direct comparisons between the North Dakota and Swiss students because of the non-standardization of the questions used by Piaget and Weil in the six to eight age range.

Question one which considered only an awareness of nation found North Dakota and Swiss students comparable between the ages of six and twelve, one Swiss and two North Dakota students were not aware of their country. Both Swiss and North Dakota students at the ages of six to eight were unsure as to where their country was or whether they were a part of the country. Beyond the age of eight both Swiss and North Dakota students were aware of their belonging to the country. The

TABLE 1  
COGNITIVE ASPECTS AGES 6-8

Questions	North Dakota Students				Swiss Students	
	Mike (6) <sup>1</sup>	James (7)	Harold (7)	Arlette (7)	Mathilde (6)	Claude (6)
Have you heard of (U.S.; Switzerland)?	Yes	Yes	No	Yes, it's a country.	Yes	It's a country.
What is it?	America	I don't know.			A canton	
Where is it?	I don't know.	I don't know.		I don't know, but it's very big.		
Is it near or far from here?	Far away	Far away	Near	It's near, I think.		
What is (hometown)?	A town	A state	A town	It's a town.	A town	A town
Where is (hometown)?	In America	Here	In North Dakota	In Switzerland	In Switzerland	In Switzerland
Are you a (home-towner)?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No, I am Swiss.
Draw a circle map with one circle for your hometown and one circle for your country.	He drew two circles the same size and apart.	The two circles are the same size and apart.	The two circles are different sizes and apart.	The two circles are small and apart.	The two circles are the same size and apart.	The two circles are apart and are different sizes.

<sup>1</sup>Refers to chronological age



TABLE 2

## COGNITIVE ASPECTS AGES 8-10

Questions	North Dakota Students			Swiss Students		
	Charles (9)	Melissa (8)	Sandra (9)	Florence (8)	Pierre (9)	Jean-Claude (9)
What is the (U.S., Switzerland)?	A country	I don't know.	A free country.	It's a country.	It is a country.	It's a country.
In what state were you born?	In North Dakota	North Dakota	North Dakota			
Draw two circles, one for the (state or canton) in which you were born and one for your country.	The circles are small, the same size and apart.	The circle for home-town is a little larger than circle for country and they are apart.	The circles are the same size and apart.	The circles of Vaud and Switzerland are drawn correctly.	The drawings are correct.	The circles are drawn correctly.
What nationality are you?	I don't know.	I don't know.	I don't know.	I'm from Vaud.	I'm Swiss.	I'm Bernese.
Are you (an American, Swiss)?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No, you can't be two things at once.	I'm Swiss.	
What is (name of home-town)?	A town	A town	A town	It's a town.	A town	A town

TABLE 2--Continued

Questions	North Dakota Students			Swiss Students		
	Charles (9)	Melissa (8)	Sandra (9)	Florence (8)	Pierre (9)	Jean-Claude (9)
Where is (this town)? (name of hometown.)	In North Dakota	In the United States	In North Dakota	In Switzerland	In Switzerland	In Switzerland
Draw a circle for your country and one for hometown.	The circles are small, about the same size and apart.	The circles are small and apart.	The circles are the same size and apart.	The circle representing the hometown is within the circle representing Switzerland.	The circle representing the hometown is within the circle representing Switzerland.	The circle representing the hometown is within the circle representing Switzerland.



TABLE 3

## COGNITIVE ASPECTS OF NATION-STATE AGES 10-12

Questions	North Dakota Students			Swiss Students	
	Scott (11)	Myra (11)	Laurie (10)	Micheline (11)	Jean-Luc (11)
What is (the United States, Switzerland)?	It's in North America.	A country	A country	A country	A country
In what state were you born?	North Dakota	North Dakota	In North Dakota		
What nationality are you?	I don't know.	An American	I don't know.	I'm Swiss.	I'm from St. Gallen.
Are you (American, Swiss)?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Draw a circle map of hometown and nation	Drawing correct	Circles apart and same size	Drawing correct	Drawing correct	Drawing correct

questions dealing with home and location of home were in general answered in a comparable manner by both Swiss and North Dakota students. At the age level of six to eight the Swiss student was slightly more aware of the location of home but this difference disappeared above the age of eight. With the question of being American or Swiss, the awareness of the North Dakota student was greater. They more easily were able to be citizens of both their hometown and country while the Swiss tended to be either citizens of hometown or country but not of both. In the effort of students to draw circle maps of hometown and nation there was considerable difference between North Dakota students and Swiss students. Both groups at the ages of six to eight had trouble conceiving the perspective of space; hometown tended to be as large as the nation and separate. After the age of eight Swiss children placed the town inside the circle for the nation. North Dakota students even at the age of twelve often drew the city outside the nation but in most cases drew the circles a different size. North Dakota students tended to think of hometown as a part of the nation but not inside the nation.

The results of subtest (2) on affective aspects of nation are presented in Tables 4 through 6 in a verbal format. Table 4 is the comparison of North Dakota elementary students and Swiss students ages six through eight. Table 5 is the comparison of North Dakota elementary students and Swiss students ages eight through ten. Table 6 is a comparison of North Dakota elementary students and Swiss students ages ten through twelve.



TABLE 4

## AFFECTIVE ASPECTS AGES 6-8

Questions	North Dakota Students				Swiss Students		
	Kenny (8)	Candice (6)	James (7)	Harold (7)	Evelyne (6)	Denise (6)	Jacques (6)
What country or countries do you like?	United States	North Dakota	Colorado	I don't know any countries.	I like Italy.	I like Switzerland.	I like Germany.
Why?	Because I live here.	Because I live here.	Because I like it there.		It is a nicer place than Switzerland.	It has pretty houses and mountains.	Mother just came back she lives there.

TABLE 5  
AFFECTIVE ASPECTS AGES 8-10

Questions	North Dakota Students			Swiss Students		
	Melesia (8)	Sandra (9)	Charles (9)	Denis (8)	Pierrette (9)	Jacqueline (9)
What country or countries do you like?	I like the United States.	Berthold (hometown)	Canada	I like Switzerland.	I like Switzerland.	I like Switzerland.
Why?	Just because	Because I live there.	Because my uncle lives there.	Because I was born there.	Because it is my own country.	It's the loveliest country for me.



TABLE 6  
AFFECTIVE ASPECTS AGES 10-12

Questions	North Dakota Students			Swiss Students		
	Myra (11)	Scott (11)	Clyde (11)	Juliette (10)	Lucien (11)	Michelle (11)
What country do you like?	France	Montana	North Dakota	I like Switzerland.	I like Switzerland.	I like Switzerland.
Why?	Because of the scenery	Because I used to live there.	Because it is the state where I live.	Because we never have any war.	Because it is a free country.	Because it is the Red Cross country.

In response to the question: What country do you like? there was considerable contrast between North Dakota students and Swiss students. While North Dakota students tended to like their hometown or a subdivision of the United States; Swiss children tended to like their home country or an adjacent country. When the children were asked why they chose the town, region, or country, the reasons became very similar, from young to older. The young children, North Dakota or Swiss, liked a place because they lived there or it was nice. As the children became older their reasons became more objective; it was where I was born, we have no wars, etc.

The results of subtest (3) on the cognitive aspects of other countries and other people is divided into two parts, the comparison of the ideas of other countries is reported in Tables 7 through 9 and knowledge of foreigners in Tables 10 through 12. Table 7 is the comparison of North Dakota elementary students and Swiss students ages six through eight. Table 8 is the comparison of North Dakota elementary students and Swiss students ages eight through ten. Table 9 is a comparison of North Dakota elementary students and Swiss students ages ten through twelve.

In response to the question of people who do not live in their hometown, both North Dakota and Swiss students were aware that people lived other places. In response to the question of a difference in people both Swiss and North Dakota students agreed that other people were different. When the question was changed to whether people in other places were good or bad, the Swiss child at the age of eight to ten tended to reject all others as being bad while North Dakota



TABLE 7

## KNOWLEDGE OF OTHER COUNTRIES AGES 6-8

Questions	North Dakota Students				Swiss Students		
	Harold (7)	Kenny (8)	Candice (6)	Arlette (7)	Monique (6)	Bernard (6)	Herbert (7)
Are there people who do not live in (hometown)?	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	
Is there a difference between hometown people and those who live elsewhere?	No	Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes
Do you know any other countries?	Yes, Park River	Yes, Canada	No	Yes, Lausanne	Yes, there is Lausanne.	Yes, there are the people of Valsis.	
How are the people different?		I don't know.	They are different colors.		They are nicer.	They have a different voice and clothes.	Well, Americans are stupid.

TABLE 8

## KNOWLEDGE OF OTHER COUNTRIES AGES 8-10

Questions	North Dakota Students				Swiss Students		
	Corliss (9)	Mark (9)	Jean (8)	Murielle (8)	Francois (9)	Michel (9)	Claudine (10)
Have you heard of foreigners?	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Are they good or bad?	Some are good and some are bad.	They are both good and bad.		Germans are bad.	The French and Germans are bad.	Child was led and stated the Russians are bad.	
Have you heard of other countries?	Japan	Europe Australia	North Dakota California	Germany France England	Italy Germany	America Russia England	Italy France England



TABLE 9  
KNOWLEDGE OF OTHER COUNTRIES AGES 10-12

Questions	North Dakota Students			Swiss Students		
	Anita (10)	Nancy (11)	Paul (10)	Jean-Luc (11)	Martin (12)	Jacques (13)
Do you know any foreign countries?	India Japan	Canada	Japan Norway	France Germany	Named many foreign countries	Named many foreign countries
Do you know any foreign cities?	Tokyo	Ottawa	Tokyo	Paris	Not asked	Not asked
What is the nationality of the people in one of the above cities?	Japanese	Canadian	Japanese	French	Not asked	Not asked
Draw a circle map for one of the cities and countries named above.	Circles are different sizes but apart.	Circles are the same size and apart.	Circles are the same size and apart.	Drawn correct	Not asked	Not asked

students reserved judgment. In response to the question of how other people are different, young North Dakota students tended to have little information except that they are a different color. The Swiss child of the same age displays more experience with other people and gave more concrete answers. In knowledge of other countries the six to eight year old Swiss and North Dakota students tended to consider any place except home to be another country. The children in the age range of eight to ten had an equal understanding of what was meant by another country and by the age range of ten to twelve were aware of many other countries.

Because of the fact that Piaget did not use standard questions it was impossible to compare Swiss and North Dakota students in the ten to twelve age range.

The results of subtest (3) on the cognitive aspects of the idea of foreigners is reported on Tables 10 through 12. Table 10 is the comparison of the idea of foreigners of North Dakota students and Swiss students age six through eight. Table 11 is a comparison of the idea of foreigner between North Dakota and Swiss students ages eight to ten. Table 12 is a comparison of the idea of foreigner between Swiss and North Dakota students ages ten to twelve.

In response to questions asked on the idea of foreigner, it was not possible to compare North Dakota and Swiss students in the age range of six to eight because Piaget and Weil did not use standard questions. From the information available it appears that between the ages of six to eight neither North Dakota or Swiss students are able to comprehend the meaning of foreign citizenship.



TABLE 10

## THE IDEA OF FOREIGNERS AGES 6-8

Questions	North Dakota Students				Swiss Students		
	Denise (6)	Paul (6)	Lucinda (7)	Georges (7)	Corinne (7)	Georges B (7)	Ivan (8)
What is a person called who does not live in the same country as you?	I don't know.	A Negro	I don't know.				
Have you ever seen a person from another country?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Oh, yes	I have seen some.	Not asked	Not asked
How did you know he was from another country?	I had never seen him before.	He was dark skinned.	They were our cousins.	By their clothes	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked
If you were traveling in a different country would you be a foreigner?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not asked	Not asked	NO, I'm Swiss.	I stay Swiss.

TABLE 10--Continued

Questions	North Dakota Students				Swiss Students		
	Denise (6)	Paul (6)	Lucinda (7)	Georges (7)	Corinne (7)	Georges B (7)	Ivan (8)
Would a person from a different country traveling in your country be a foreigner?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Yes
Would a person from another country be a foreigner in that country?	Yes	Yes	No	Not asked	Not asked	Naturally	He stays a foreigner
Is a person from a near by town a foreigner?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked
				(A fifth child was asked replied Yes)			



TABLE 11

## THE IDEA OF FOREIGNERS AGES 8-10

Questions	North Dakota Students			Jacques (8)	Swiss Students	
	Laurie (10)	Ricky (8)	Jeff (9)		Elaine (9)	Jean-Jacques (9)
What do you call a person who lives in a different country?	Don't know	Don't know	A citizen			
Do you know what a foreigner is?				Yes	Not asked	Not asked
What nationality are you?	I don't know. (Researcher defined the word foreigner)	I don't know.	I don't know.	Not asked	I'm Swiss,	I'm Swiss.
Is a person from a near by country a foreigner?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not asked	Yes	Yes
Is a person from a near by country a foreigner in his country?	Yes	Yes	No	Not asked	No	No
Is a person from a near by country a foreigner if he is in your country?	Yes	No	Yes	Not asked	Yes	No
Can you become a foreigner?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not asked	Not asked	Yes

TABLE 12

## THE IDEA OF FOREIGNERS AGES 10-12

Questions	North Dakota Students					Swiss Students		
	Scott (11)	Larry (11)	Douglas (12)	Larry (10)	Murielle (10)	Robert (11)	Marion (12)	Pierre (12)
Do you know what a foreigner is?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not asked	Yes
What is your nationality?	American	Norwegian	German	American	Not asked	Swiss	I'm Swiss.	I'm Swiss.
Could you become a foreigner?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Is a person in another country a foreigner to you?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



The North Dakota students were given the definition of the word foreigner and still could not use the word. The remainder of the discussion of this question will be limited to the age groups of eight to twelve.

In response to the question: What is a foreigner? Neither the North Dakota or Swiss student in the age range of eight to ten was able to respond. Above the age of ten both North Dakota and Swiss students were aware of who was a foreigner. In response to their nationality the North Dakota student was not aware until after the age of ten while the Swiss student was aware of nationality by the age of eight.

In response to questions of how a person becomes a foreigner both the North Dakota and Swiss students gave similar answers. The North Dakota students required a definition of the word foreigner in the age range of eight to ten but with the definition were able to respond with fair accuracy. The Piaget and Weil study does not indicate whether or not a definition of the word foreigner was given the eight to ten year olds or not. In response both groups gave about the same number of incorrect answers. Above the age of ten both the Swiss and North Dakota students were in general comfortable with the idea of foreigner and gave only a few incorrect answers. Both the North Dakota and Swiss students over the age of ten were aware of their nationality.

The results of subtest (4) on the affective motivation toward spatial discrimination is reported in Tables 13 through 15. Table 13 is a comparison of affective motivation toward spatial discrimination between North Dakota and Swiss students ages six through eight. Table 14 is a comparison of affective motivation toward spatial discrimination

TABLE 13

## AFFECTIVE MOTIVATION TOWARD SPATIAL DISCRIMINATION AGES 6-8

Questions	North Dakota Students			Swiss Students		
	Brenda (6)	Mike (6)	Laurie (8)	Christian (6)	Charles (7)	Brian (6) (English)
If you were born with- out belonging to a country so you could choose any country what country would you choose to live in?	North Dakota	New York	Wolford (hometown)	Switzerland	Switzerland	England
Why?	Just because	I think I would like it there.	Because I like it here.	The Swiss are nice.	There is more to eat here.	The English are nicer.
If I asked the same question to a Canadian or French boy the same ques- tion what do you think his answer would be?	Where he lives	I don't know.	In the United States	He would want to be Swiss.	He would want to be Swiss.	England



TABLE 14

## AFFECTIVE MOTIVATION TOWARD SPATIAL DISCRIMINATION AGES 8-10

Questions	North Dakota Students			Swiss Students		
	Laurie (8)	Charles (8)	Jeneava (8)	Marina (8)	Jeannot (8)	Maurice (8)
If you were born with- out a country, what country would you choose to live in?	Valley City (hometown)	Canada	Wolford (hometown)	(Italian) Italy	St. Gallois (home)	Switzerland
Why?	Because I like this town.	I have an uncle who lives there.	It isn't so busy here.	The Italians are smarter.	The people are nicer.	The Swiss are nicer.
If I asked the same question to a Canadian or French boy where do you think he would like	Valley City, I think he would like it here.	United States	Where he now lives.	Where he now lives.	Where he now lives.	France

TABLE 15

## AFFECTIVE MOTIVATION TOWARD SPATIAL DISCRIMINATION AGES 10-12

Questions	North Dakota Students			Swiss Students	
	Laurie (10)	Tamie (11)	Bobby (11)	Arlette (12)	Fanine (13)
If you were born with- out a country so that you could choose any country in the world what country would you choose?	United States	United States	Japan	Switzerland	Switzerland
Why?	This country has everything we need.	Because it is the richest country in the world.	There are so many interesting things there.	Because I was born here.	Because it is my country I was born here.
If I asked the same question to a Canadian or French boy, what do you think his answer would be?	Canada	Canada	Norway	France	France



between North Dakota and Swiss students ages eight to ten. Table 15 is a comparison of affective motivation towards spatial discrimination between North Dakota and Swiss students ages ten to twelve.

In response to the question of where they would like to live if they were born without a country North Dakota and Swiss students demonstrate the value of maturity and experience with increasing age. Both North Dakota and Swiss students in the age range of six to eight and limited to a choice of home within the range of their experience which in general means where they now live. Students of this age either North Dakota or Swiss are limited in the reasons for their choice of countries. In the age range of eight to ten both groups of students tend to choose their present home or home country as the best place to live. This is very similar to the younger age group but at this age range more experience allows the students to be more positive in their reason why this choice was made. The oldest age group ten to twelve also most often gave their present country, but North Dakota students were more diverse than the Swiss students. At the age of ten to twelve both Swiss and North Dakota students gave cognitive rather than affective reasons for their choice of countries.

When the students were asked to place themselves in the position of a student from a nearby country and then choose a country in which to make their home, there was some difference between North Dakota and Swiss students. In the age range of six to eight the Swiss student was not able to place himself in the position of a French child and still chose Switzerland. It appeared that the North Dakota student was more able to role play and chose Canada

for the Canadian student about as often as the United States. Also a number of North Dakota students at this age would not choose a country for a Canadian student. Above the age of eight the most common choice of home for the Canadian or French student was either Canada or France. In the age range of eight to ten the Swiss student was somewhat more positive than the North Dakota student. By age range of ten to twelve both groups gave the same answers.

#### Question Two

Do North Dakota elementary students develop an understanding of nationalism in a predictable pattern? The students in each grade, from grade one through six, were compared to the students in each of the other five grades to determine their knowledge of home, state, and nation in relationship to the students in each of the other grades. The students were compared based on their total score received on the instrument; they were also compared by the scores they received in five subdivisions of the instrument. The five subdivisions of the instrument are as follows: (2a) Cognitive aspects of home, state, and nation (2b) Cognitive aspects of the relationship of home and nation (2c) Affective aspects of nation (2d) Cognitive aspects of other countries and other people (2e) Affective motivation toward spatial discrimination.

Do North Dakota elementary students conceive an understanding of home, state, and nation following a predictable pattern? The results of the total scores on the instrument compared between grades are presented in Table 16. The F ratio of 23.48 was significant beyond the .001 level. Therefore, North Dakota elementary students



do conceive an understanding of home, state, and nation following a predictable pattern.

TABLE 16

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR SCORES RECEIVED ON TOTAL ASPECTS OF HOME, STATE, AND NATION

Grade	N	Mean	SD
One	42	16.57	4.94
Two	42	19.66	5.32
Three	42	18.07	5.95
Four	42	21.47	5.32
Five	41	25.35	5.47
Six	35	27.28	5.37
Treatment F ratio 23.48***			

\*\*\*Significant at the .001 level

The results for scores received in subtest (2a) considering cognitive aspects of home, state, and nation, are reported in Table 17. The F ratio of 20.04 is significant beyond the .001 level. Therefore, there is predictable progress in the knowledge of home, state, and nation among North Dakota elementary students.

The results for scores received in subtest (2b) considering the cognitive aspects of the relationship of home and nation are reported in Table 18. The F ratio of 6.22 is significant beyond the .001 level. Therefore, there is predictable progress in the knowledge of the relationship of home and nation among North Dakota elementary students.

TABLE 17

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR SCORES RECEIVED ON SUBTEST (2a)

Grade	N	Mean	SD
One	42	7.04	2.70
Two	42	7.50	2.55
Three	42	8.38	2.21
Four	42	9.23	1.80
Five	41	10.54	2.19
Six	35	11.08	2.07
Treatment F ratio 20.04***			

\*\*\*Significant at the .001 level

TABLE 18

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR SCORES RECEIVED ON SUBTEST (2b)

Grade	N	Mean	SD
One	42	.83	.69
Two	42	.73	.62
Three	42	.95	.79
Four	42	1.16	.65
Five	41	1.33	.81
Six	35	1.45	.70
Treatment F ratio 6.22***			

\*\*\*Significant at the .001 level



The results for scores received in subtest (2c) considering the affective aspects of nation are reported in Table 19. The F ratio of 19.69 is significant beyond the .001 level. Therefore, there is predictable progress in the knowledge of affective aspects of nation among North Dakota elementary students.

TABLE 19

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR SCORES RECEIVED ON SUBTEST (2c)

Grade	N	Mean	SD
One	42	4.47	2.69
Two	42	6.21	2.55
Three	42	3.21	2.20
Four	42	4.57	2.73
Five	41	7.40	2.63
Six	35	7.59	2.22
Treatment F ratio 19.69***			

\*\*\*Significant at the .001 level

The results for scores received in subtest (2d) considering the cognitive aspects of other nations and other people is reported in Table 20. The F ratio of 3.28 is significant at .01 level. Therefore, there is predictable progress in the knowledge of cognitive aspects of other countries and other people among North Dakota elementary students.

TABLE 20

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF SCORES RECEIVED ON SUBTEST (2d)

Grade	N	Mean	SD
One	42	3.88	1.92
Two	42	4.57	1.98
Three	42	4.45	2.14
Four	42	5.14	2.30
Five	41	5.19	2.27
Six	35	5.62	2.12
Treatment F ratio 3.28**			

\*\*Significant at the .01 level

Results for scores received in subtest (2e) considering the affective motivation toward spatial discrimination is reported in Table 21. The F ratio of 11.67 is significant beyond the .001 level. Therefore, there is predictable progress in the affective motivation toward spatial discrimination among North Dakota elementary students.

### Question Three

Do North Dakota elementary students differ in their nationalistic conception from east to west and from north to south within North Dakota? The North Dakota elementary schools investigated by this research were divided into three regions east to west along normal physiographic boundaries; i.e., the Red River Valley, the Drift Prairie, and the Missouri Plateau. The state was also divided into two nearly equal north to south regions by the 48th degree of north latitude.



TABLE 21

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF SCORES RECEIVED ON SUBTEST (2e)

Grade	N	Mean	SD
One	42	1.40	1.03
Two	42	1.59	1.21
Three	42	2.02	1.17
Four	42	2.54	1.06
Five	41	2.61	1.20
Six	35	2.97	1.15
Treatment F ratio 11.67***			

\*\*\*Significant at the .001 level

All of the students in the Red River Valley were compared by total scores received on the instrument to all the students in the Drift Prairie and the Missouri Plateau in Table 22. The F ratio of .26 was non-significant. Therefore, North Dakota elementary students do not differ in their conception of nationalism from east to west.

All of the students investigated by this research who were located north of the 48th degree of north latitude were compared by total score received on the instrument with the students located south of the 47.5 degree of north latitude in Table 23. The F ratio of 1.72 was non-significant. Therefore, North Dakota elementary students do not differ in their conception of nationalism from north to south.

TABLE 22

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF SCORES RECEIVED BY STUDENTS IN  
EASTERN, CENTRAL AND WESTERN NORTH DAKOTA

Location	N	Mean	SD
Red River Valley (East)	101	21.04	7.15
Drift Prairie (Central)	83	21.08	6.46
Missouri Plateau (West)	61	21.77	5.57
Treatment F ratio .26 (NS)			

TABLE 23

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF SCORES RECEIVED BY STUDENTS IN  
NORTHERN NORTH DAKOTA AND SOUTHERN NORTH DAKOTA

Location	N	Mean	SD
North	125	20.69	6.86
South	120	21.80	6.15
Treatment F ratio 1.72 (NS)			

#### Question Four

Do North Dakota elementary students from rural communities differ from urban communities in their concept of nationalism? All of the students investigated by this research living in what was determined to be rural communities were compared by total score on the instrument with the total score received by students living in urban communities



of North Dakota in Table 24. The F ratio of .05 was non-significant. Therefore, North Dakota elementary students from rural communities do not differ in their nationalistic conceptions from students in urban communities.

TABLE 24

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF SCORES RECEIVED BY RURAL AND URBAN NORTH DAKOTA STUDENTS

Location	N	Mean	SD
Rural	179	21.18	6.76
Urban	66	21.39	5.93
Treatment F ratio .05 (NS)			

#### Question Five

Do North Dakota elementary students from homogeneous ethnic communities differ from heterogeneous ethnic communities in their concept of nationalism? The total scores received by the students, from preselected homogeneous ethnic communities were compared with the total scores received by the randomly selected North Dakota elementary students. The students from homogeneous ethnic communities were also compared to the randomly selected population in five sub-test areas as follows: (5a) Cognitive aspects of home, state, and nation (5b) Cognitive aspects of the relationship of home and nation (5c) Affective aspects of nation (5d) Cognitive aspects of other countries and other peoples (5e) Affective motivation toward spatial discrimination.

Do North Dakota elementary students from homogeneous ethnic communities differ in nationalistic conception from students living in heterogeneous communities? The total scores of students from homogeneous ethnic communities are compared to the total scores received on the instrument by students from the randomly selected population in Table 25. The F ratio of 1.13 was non-significant. Therefore, students from homogeneous ethnic communities in North Dakota do not differ in their conception of home, state, nation from students in heterogeneous North Dakota communities.

TABLE 25

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF SCORES RECEIVED BY STUDENTS FROM  
HOMOGENEOUS COMMUNITIES COMPARED TO SCORES RECEIVED BY STUDENTS  
FROM HETEROGENEOUS COMMUNITIES

Nationality	N	Mean	SD
Slavic	12	19.75	7.39
German	12	20.08	6.98
Scandinavian	12	24.75	6.29
Icelandic	12	21.58	9.33
All other students	196	21.16	6.26
Treatment F ratio 1.13 (NS)			

The results for scores received in subtest (5a) considering the effect of single ethnic community on cognitive aspects of home, state, and nation are reported in Table 26. The F ratio of 1.47 was non-significant. Therefore, students from homogeneous ethnic communities



do not differ from students in heterogeneous communities in cognitive aspects of home, state, nation.

TABLE 26

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF SCORES RECEIVED IN SUBTEST (5a)

Nationality	N	Mean	SD
Slavic	12	7.66	2.80
German	12	8.33	3.67
Scandinavian	12	10.16	2.88
Icelandic	12	8.66	4.22
All other students	196	8.95	2.48
Treatment F ratio 1.47 (NS)			

The results for scores received on subtest (5b) considering the effect of homogeneous communities on cognitive aspects of home and nation are reported in Table 27. The F ratio of 1.28 was not significant. Therefore, homogeneous communities have not affected the cognitive aspects of home and nation among North Dakota elementary students.

The results for scores received on subtest (5c) considering the effect of homogeneous communities on affective aspects of nation are reported in Table 28. The F ratio of 1.21 was non-significant. Therefore, a homogeneous community does not affect the affective aspects of nation.

TABLE 27

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF SCORES RECEIVED IN SUBTEST (5b)

Nationality	N	Mean	SD
Slavic	12	1.08	.51
German	12	.75	.75
Scandinavian	12	1.33	.65
Icelandic	12	1.33	.77
All other students	196	1.05	.77
Treatment F ratio 1.28 (NS)			

TABLE 28

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF SCORES RECEIVED ON SUBTEST (5c)

Nationality	N	Mean	SD
Slavic	12	5.66	3.05
German	12	4.83	3.45
Scandinavian	12	7.00	2.41
Icelandic	12	4.58	3.31
All other students	196	5.52	2.93
Treatment F ratio 1.21 (NS)			



The results of scores received on subtest (5d) considering the effect of homogeneous communities on cognitive aspects of other countries and other people are reported in Table 29. The F ratio of .45 is non-significant. Therefore, a homogeneous community does not affect the cognitive aspects of other countries and other people.

TABLE 29

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF SCORES RECEIVED ON SUBTEST (5d)

Nationality	N	Mean	SD
Slavic	12	4.66	2.77
German	12	4.33	2.38
Scandinavian	12	4.91	1.83
Icelandic	12	5.50	2.35
All other students	196	4.80	2.15
Treatment F ratio .45 (NS)			

The results of scores received on subtest (5e) considering the effect of the homogeneous communities on affective motivation toward spatial discrimination are reported in Table 30. The F ratio of 2.63 is significant at the .05 level. Therefore, a homogeneous ethnic community does effect the affective motivation toward spatial discrimination.

Do North Dakota elementary students from a homogeneous community differ from students from other homogeneous communities in their conception of nationalism?

TABLE 30

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF SCORES RECEIVED ON SUBTEST (5e)

Nationality	N	Mean	SD
Slavic	12	1.83	1.26
German	12	2.50	1.73
Scandinavian	12	2.75	.86
Icelandic	12	3.00	1.34
All other students	196	2.08	1.22
Treatment F ratio 2.63*			

\*Significant at the .05 level

The students from the four homogeneous communities were compared in their conception of home, state, and nation with each other. The total scores on the instrument were compared as well as the five subtests of the instrument in Table 31.

In the comparison of the four homogeneous ethnic communities with each other, none of the F ratios exceeded 1.96, on the total instrument or on the five subtests thus the variance was non-significant. Therefore, students from homogeneous ethnic communities do not differ from each other in their conception of home, state and nation.



TABLE 31

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF SCORES RECEIVED BY STUDENTS FROM HOMOGENEOUS ETHNIC COMMUNITIES  
IN COMPARISON WITH EACH OTHER ON THE CONCEPTION OF HOME, STATE, AND NATION

Nationality	Total test			Subtest (1) Cognitive aspects of home, state, and nation.			Subtest (2) Cognitive aspects of the relationship of home and nation.		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD
Slavic	12	19.75	7.39	12	7.66	2.80	12	1.08	.51
German	12	20.08	6.98	12	8.33	3.67	12	.75	.75
Scandinavian	12	24.75	6.29	12	10.16	2.88	12	1.33	.65
Icelandic	12	21.58	9.33	12	8.66	4.22	12	1.33	.77
Treatment F ratio 1.08 (NS)				Treatment F ratio 1.12 (NS)			Treatment F ratio 1.96 (NS)		
Subtest (3) Affective aspects of nation				Subtest (4) Cognitive aspects of other nations and other people.			Subtest (5) Affective motivation toward spatial discrimination		
Slavic	12	5.66	3.05	12	4.66	2.77	12	1.83	1.26
German	12	4.83	3.45	12	4.33	2.38	12	2.50	1.73
Scandinavian	12	7.00	2.41	12	4.91	1.83	12	2.75	.86
Icelandic	12	4.58	3.31	12	5.50	2.35	12	3.00	1.34
Treatment F ratio 1.49 (NS)				Treatment F ratio .52 (NS)			Treatment F ratio 1.68 (NS)		

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

The major purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which chronological age is a factor in the conception of nationalism by elementary school children.

Previous research has both supported and rejected the proposition that chronological age is a factor in the ability to learn concepts. Other research does agree that children do advance through cognitive stages to maturity. Research has found that if students are unable to comprehend the tasks or material they are studying, or are unable to find a purpose for knowing, or are unable to find an attainable goal they will lose interest, cease to try and accept failure. If material under investigation is too simple it will cause students to withdraw, lose interest and possibly even fail.

Social studies has been and is involved in a rather complex curriculum change. In the past a course in elementary social studies meant memorization of historical and geographical facts. Historically, the usual methodology was to teach history and geography as separate disciplines. After the 1920's educators developed a rather strong interest in fusing history and geography at the elementary level. This new course was usually either time



based or space based. Often the two disciplines were taught side by side and not integrated.

As Joyce (1965) and others have emphasized, elementary social studies has now grown in breadth to include all of the social sciences, which introduces a very serious question as to when and how to teach this mass of material. A number of researchers have proposed new methodologies of teaching social studies such as deductive or inductive inquiry, problem solving, creative thinking, etc. Also a number of new curricula have been written which move content from higher grade levels to lower grade levels.

As new curricula and methodologies for social studies are prepared it becomes very important to determine at what age and grade level students are capable of conceptualizing the material being presented. If educators do not analyze this problem they are in danger of hindering a child's learning process by causing him to withdraw from the learning process.

It was the intent of this research to provide statistical data and verbal comparisons on selected research questions to determine the effect of children's chronological age on the ability to generalize social studies concepts.

The following research questions were investigated:

1. Do North Dakota elementary students differ from Swiss Children investigated by Piaget in their concept of nation?
2. Do North Dakota elementary students develop an understanding of nationalism in a predictable pattern?

3. Do North Dakota elementary students differ in their nationalistic conception from east to west and from north to south within North Dakota?

4. Do North Dakota elementary students from rural communities differ from urban communities in their concept of nationalism?

5. Do North Dakota elementary students from homogeneous ethnic communities differ from heterogeneous ethnic communities in their concept of nationalism?

The research population used in the investigation consisted of stratified randomly selected students in grades one through six, from six regions of North Dakota. Two students were selected from each grade level in the elementary schools. Two rural and one urban community were selected for each of the six regions of North Dakota. Four homogeneous ethnic communities were selected and two students per grade were also selected from these schools. One of the homogeneous ethnic communities was also chosen in the random selection. The total population redefined for analysis in the following manner including both randomly selected students and students from pre-selected homogeneous communities was 244 students. The population included students from twenty one different schools in twenty one different communities. The population included students from six urban communities and fifteen rural communities. The population consisted of forty-two first graders, forty-two second graders, forty-two third graders, forty-two fourth graders, forty-one fifth graders, and thirty-five sixth graders. The population consisted of 178 rural students and sixty-six urban students. The population



also consisted of 101 students from the Red River Valley (east), eighty-three students from the Drift Prairie (central), sixty students from the Missouri Plateau (west); 125 students from northern North Dakota, and 119 from southern North Dakota.

All students participating in the study were administered a questionnaire constructed from a model used by Piaget and Weil (1951) but modified to the North Dakota situation. The questionnaire was administered on a one to one basis with verbal answers which were tape recorded. The only non-verbal exercise required by the student was to draw two or three circle maps.

The basis statistical design utilized in the study were several one way analysis of variance. Only the information given in completing the questionnaire was analyzed statistically. Significance was reported from the .001 level to the .05 level, no other levels of significance were considered.

### Summary of Findings

#### Research Question One

Do North Dakota elementary students differ from Swiss Children investigated by Piaget in their concept of nation?

1a. There was no significant difference between the ability of the North Dakota elementary students in 1969 and Swiss students in the 1940's. Both groups of students entered school at the age of six with about the same knowledge and concepts of their home and nation. At the sixth grade level both student groups had about the same level of sophistication in nationalistic conception. The middle age group had



more variation than either the younger or older age groups. In general the eight to ten year old Swiss student was more sure of himself in his relationship of home and nation. This researcher considers the greater experience of the Swiss child who has had more concrete contacts with other countries and people to be the factor in the appearance of greater knowledge at this age level. While the Swiss child in general demonstrated more knowledge than the North Dakota child in the age range of eight to ten he had more trouble explaining his national citizenship than did the North Dakota student.

1b. There was no significant difference between Swiss and North Dakota students in cognitive aspects of home, state, and nation. But the Swiss child between the ages of six and ten seemed to have more knowledge about his country as a whole than was true of the North Dakota student. The North Dakota student was much more positive in knowledge of citizenship than was the Swiss child below the age of ten. Above the age of ten there was no difference between the two groups.

1c. Both the Swiss and North Dakota students demonstrated an affective feeling for home or home country up to the age of ten. The answers given on affective aspects of home and nation indicated a limited number of experiences for both groups below the age of ten. Above the age of ten both groups of students demonstrated an affective choice of their home country with only limited digression to other countries. But the reason for choosing their country changed from affective reasoning to cognitive reasoning for both groups above the age of ten.



ld. In the knowledge of other countries the greater experience of the Swiss was apparent above the age of eight. Both the Swiss and North Dakota students in all three age groups were about equal in the ability to name countries. A rather interesting point was the trust or distrust of other countries and people. The Swiss child, especially in the age range of eight to ten, thought other countries and people were bad. The North Dakota student was much more willing to allow the other country or people to prove themselves as either good or bad. Because of non-standard questions given the Swiss students it was not possible to compare the ten to twelve age groups.

le. The difference between Swiss and North Dakota children in experience with other countries and people was also apparent in the knowledge of foreigners. The younger Swiss children below the age of ten were more cognizant of other people than were North Dakota students. The North Dakota students were limited to differences of skin color or language, because of limited or no personal experience with other people. The Swiss child was able to consider differences in environment, food, dress, and other considerations of similar sophistication, which were not mentioned by North Dakota students. By the age of ten the North Dakota students had made up for their lack of experience and there was no significant difference in this age range.

lf. There was no significant difference between Swiss and North Dakota students in affective motivation toward spatial discrimination. As was true of affective aspects of nation the oldest age groups gave cognitive reasons for their affective motivation

toward their country, with the Swiss giving more sophisticated answers. The younger North Dakota student was somewhat more open toward the idea that there may be other good places to live besides the United States. The younger Swiss child was very firm with the idea that the only good place for anyone to live was Switzerland. The older children of both groups tended to choose their own country but would accept the fact that a child from another country would choose his own country.

#### Research Question Two

Do North Dakota elementary students develop an understanding of nationalism in a predictable pattern?

2a. In consideration of scores on the total instrument North Dakota students do conceive an understanding of nationalism following a predictable pattern beyond the .001 level of significance.

2b. In understanding cognitive aspects of home, state, and nation the difference between grades was significant beyond the .001 level. Each successive grade level achieved significantly higher grades than did the lower grades. The standard deviation also decreased with an increase in grade level.

2c. In the understanding of the relationship of home and nation the difference between grades was significant beyond the .001 level. The sixth grade received scores nearly twice as high as did the first grade. The limited experience of the first grader was very evident.

2d. In the understanding of affective aspects of nation the difference between grades was significant to the .001 level.



2e. In the understanding of other countries and other people the difference between grades was significant to the .01 level. Up to the age level of ten, fourth grade, the students in general had difficulty with the word foreigner.

2f. The affective motivation toward spatial discrimination varied between grades significant above the .001 level. The students in all grades knew where they wanted to live but the younger children were unsure of the reason for their choice. The fifth and sixth grade students were positive in their choice with concrete reasons. The older children were also able to role play the position of a child from another country. The ability to role play was not found in the younger children.

### Research Question Three

Do North Dakota elementary students differ in their nationalistic conception from east to west and from north to south within North Dakota?

3a. There was no significant difference in nationalistic conception between students living in the Red River Valley, the Drift Prairie, or the Missouri Plateau. The total range in mean scores between the three regions was from 21.04 to 21.77.

3b. There was no significant difference in nationalistic conception between students living in northern and southern North Dakota. The range of the mean scores from 20.69 to 21.80 is not explained in part by the number of students studied. The southern region with three less sixth graders had the highest mean score.

#### Research Question Four

Do North Dakota elementary students from rural communities differ from urban communities in their concept of nationalism?

4a. There was no significant difference in nationalistic conception between urban and rural students. The range of mean scores was 21.18 to 21.39. Urban students had a slightly better understanding of other nations and people. The rural students excelled their urban neighbors in the understanding of space.

#### Research Question Five

Do North Dakota elementary students from homogeneous ethnic communities differ from heterogeneous ethnic communities in their concept of nationalism?

5a. In the comparison of students from Slavic, German, Scandinavian, and Icelandic communities to students from the other eighteen communities in the study there was no significant difference between groups. In comparison of the students from Slavic German, Scandinavian, and Icelandic communities with each other there was no significant difference between groups. In both comparisons the Scandinavian students scored the highest and the Slavic the lowest. At least in part this would be the result of the Slavic community being rather isolated. The Scandinavian community located in the most wealthy area of the state could cause the students to be more traveled and experienced.

5b. There was no significant difference in the comparison of the four homogeneous communities to the remainder of the population



on the question of understanding the cognitive aspects of home, state, and nation. There was no significant difference in the comparison of the four groups to each other on the same question.

5c. There was no significant difference between the four homogeneous ethnic communities and the remainder of the population in the understanding of the relationship of home and nation. There was no significant difference in the understanding of the relationship of home and nation in comparing the four homogeneous ethnic communities except the Germanic had a better understanding of the home nation relationship than did the heterogeneous ethnic communities.

5d. There was no significant difference in the understanding of affective aspects of nation comparing the four homogeneous ethnic communities with the remainder of the population. In comparison of the four homogeneous communities with each other on the same question there was no significant difference. The Scandinavian students stood well above the other homogeneous communities as well as the heterogeneous communities in affective aspects of nation.

5e. There was no significant difference in cognitive aspects of other countries and other people comparing the four homogeneous communities with the heterogeneous communities. There was no significant difference between the four homogeneous communities on the same question. The mean scores on this question had little variance including both the homogeneous ethnic communities and the heterogeneous ethnic communities.

5f. There was significant difference to the .05 level when comparing the four homogeneous communities to the heterogeneous



ethnic communities on the question of motivation toward spatial discrimination. There was no significant difference in the comparison of the four homogeneous ethnic communities to each other. The German, Scandinavian, and Icelandic students had mean scores well above the mean scores of the heterogeneous ethnic students and the Slavic students were only slightly below the heterogeneous ethnic students mean scores.

### Discussion and Conclusions

The finding of no significant difference between North Dakota elementary students studied in 1969 and Swiss students studied in the 1940's gives rather strong support to the conclusions of Piaget (1950, 1957), Peel (1961), Hull (1920), Heidebreder (1948, 1949), Fiefel and Lorge (1950) and others who have stated that chronological age is a factor in the development and generalization of concepts. Without question the conditions under which the study of Piaget and Weil (1951) was conducted were considerably different than the conditions under which the present study was conducted. The Swiss study was conducted in Geneva--a large international city--Switzerland--a small compact European country with many international contacts. By comparison North Dakota is located in the center of a large continent with a population noted for isolationistic tendencies. None of the North Dakota students lived in communities over 60,000. Piaget and Weil's study was completed prior to the onset of the multi-media; the North Dakota students have been exposed to multi-media since birth. The Swiss study conducted shortly after the end of the Second World War involved children who would have had limited travel experience in



comparison to the travel experiences of the present mobile American population. The fact that the two studies some twenty years apart, testing the same concepts, had similar results would support the finding of the above named researchers to the extent that a child must have a certain maturity before he is capable of assimilating concept generalizations or abstract concepts.

The inference that Swiss children in the eight to ten year old range had more information to work with or at least a broader understanding of their home and nation than did North Dakota students of the same age range would be supported by the research of Weaver (1965). While the above was true, the six to eight and ten to twelve year old North Dakota students were comparable to the Swiss student. The small country and the strong international ties of the Swiss would give a Swiss child of eight to ten more concrete evidence of other countries and other people than would be true of a child of the same age in isolated North Dakota. The inference that the ten to twelve year old North Dakota student was on a par with the Swiss student of the same age would support the research of Piaget (1950) and others who state that with maturity a child can generalize or deal with abstract ideas and no longer needs as much concrete evidence. The conclusion drawn from this comparison of North Dakota and Swiss children is that at least with young children, travel, and multi-media, have not affected a child's ability with maturity to conceive his home, state, and nation in the correct perspective.

The very strong significance of chronological age in the conception of nationalism among North Dakota elementary students

would support the research of Piaget (1950, 1953, 1957), Strauss (1952), Welch and Long (1940), and Deutsche (1937). The above researchers found that chronological age is a factor in the ability of children to form and generalize concepts.

To give strength to the above research an inspection of the subdivisions within the instrument gives more evidence to support the effect of chronological age. The younger children had the most knowledge, concrete facts, about their home area and the least knowledge about other countries and other people. Also in the relationship of home to nation the young child supported the Piaget (1950) theory of egocentricity and thought of their hometown as being equal and adjacent to the country. In fact two six year olds from different communities told this researcher that their hometown was the whole world. For them, all the people in the world lived in each of these little communities, neither of which consisted of 100 people. With increasing age the students demonstrated a higher level of sophistication in hometown nation relationships.

The same conditions were apparent in the affective aspects of nation. All the children were aware of home country and the fact that it was their country but the young child was unsure as to why it was his country. The older child was positive of his relationship to his country. This supports the research of Piaget and Weil (1951) and Peel (1961).

In understanding of other countries and other people there was significant difference between grades beyond the .01 level. Other countries and other people were difficult concepts for children below



the age of ten. Young children had heard of names which were other countries, but most common to the six to eight year olds was the consideration that the next town was foreign and the people foreigners. Not until the age of ten does the word foreigner have meaning to North Dakota children who then are able to use the word correctly.

The scores on affective motivation toward spatial discrimination indicated a strong difference between grades which was significant beyond the .001 level. When young children were told they had been born without belonging to a country and could choose any country in the world they often chose their hometown. Not until they were about ten years old did they with regularity choose their country over their home. Also when asked why they made the choice the younger children were rather unsure. The younger child was also unable to take the position of a child from another country. Above the age of ten, children had a positive affective motivation toward spatial discrimination and excellent reasons for their choice of countries. Above the age of ten, children were able to take the position of a child from another country, this would be in agreement with the research of Piaget (1950).

There was no significant difference in the conception of nationalism in the different locations within North Dakota. There was no significant difference in the conception of nationalism between rural and urban students. There was also no significant difference in the conception of nationalism between students from homogeneous ethnic communities and heterogeneous ethnic communities. Also there was no significant difference in the conception of nationalism between the four homogeneous ethnic communities.

The fact that location, size of community, and ethnic origin did not effect the conception of nationalism plus the correlation of the present study to the Piaget and Weil (1951) study of the late 1940's adds strength to the research of Piaget (1950, 1957), Peel (1961), and other researchers who have emphasized that maturity is a factor which influences when children will learn certain concepts.

The major conclusions which evolved from the study are as follows:

1. In learning social studies concepts young children will be more successful if the concepts are concrete and consider local situations. With maturity children are capable of generalizing concepts, relating concrete concepts to abstract concepts and by the age of twelve many children are capable of internalizing abstract concepts.
2. The multi-media in its many variations has not improved the ability of a North Dakota student to learn social studies concepts beyond that of the Swiss student in the pre multi-media era. This study supports the Piaget theory that maturity must be achieved before a child has the capability to internalize concepts.
3. In portions of the elementary curricula which are concerned with spatial relationships and the student's personal relationship to other people, concrete experiences are important in concept formation.
4. Location, community size, and ethnic origins are not factors that would require special curricula or methodologies in order for students to conceive an understanding of nationalism.



5. It would be difficult for students to work with curricula which introduced abstract social studies concepts below the fourth grade or about ten years of age.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

The following suggestions are offered for further research as a result of the findings of this study:

1. A long range research study should be conducted considering the effects of new curricula on learning social studies concepts. Curricula which may have a long range effect on learning would be those which have changed the difficulty of material presented to students of various ages.

2. It is recommended that further research be conducted to define more accurately within what age range the average child would be capable of assimilating other social studies concepts. Some concepts to be considered would be distance, time, social grouping, monetary values, and governmental process.

3. As this study was concerned primarily with geographic and sociological concepts, additional research is required to determine if the same chronological stages apply to other social studies disciplines. For example do children progress through the same stages in their ability to grasp historical concepts of now and then? Would children progress through similar stages in grasping concepts concerned with governmental process?

APPENDIX A



# THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONALISM IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN OF NORTH DAKOTA

Age (6 - 7)

Age (8 - 10)

Age (11 - 12)

## Cognitive Development of the Idea of Homeland

- |                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Have you heard of the United States?                                         | 1. What is the United States?                                                                     | 1. What is the United States?                                                                     |
| 2. What is it?                                                                  | 2. In what state were you born?                                                                   | 2. In what state were you born?                                                                   |
| 3. Where is the United States?                                                  | 3. What nationality are you?                                                                      | 3. What nationality are you?                                                                      |
| 4. Is it near or far away from here?                                            | 4. Are you an American?                                                                           | 4. Draw two circles one for the United States and the other for the state in which you were born. |
| 5. Is the United States very large?                                             | 5. Draw two circles one for the United States and the other for the state in which you were born. | 5. Are you an American?                                                                           |
| 6. Are you an American?                                                         | 6. What is _____ (hometown)?                                                                      | 6. What is _____ (hometown)?                                                                      |
| 7. What is _____ (hometown)?                                                    | 7. Where is _____ (hometown)?                                                                     | 7. What is _____ (hometown)?                                                                      |
| 8. Where is _____ (hometown)?                                                   | 8. Are you a _____ (hometown)?                                                                    | 8. Are you a _____ (hometown)?                                                                    |
| 9. Are you a _____ (hometown)?                                                  | 9. Draw a circle for hometown and a circle for United States.                                     | 9. Draw a circle for hometown and a circle for United States.                                     |
| 10. Draw two circles one for the United States and the other for your hometown. |                                                                                                   |                                                                                                   |

Age (6 - 7)

Age (8 - 10)

Age (11 - 12)

Affective Development of the Idea of Homeland

1. What country do you like?  
Explain why.

1. What country do you like?  
Explain why.

1. What country do you like?  
Explain why.

The Reaction of Children Toward Countries Other Than Their Own

1. Are there people who do not  
live in your hometown?

1. Do you know any foreign coun-  
tries?

1. Do you know any other  
countries?

2. Is there any difference  
between the people of home-  
town and those who live in  
other places?

2. What is the capital of one  
countries named in question one?

2. Do you know any foreign  
cities?

3. What is the difference if it  
applies?

3. Draw two circles one for the  
country and the other for the  
capital.

3. In what country is one of  
cities located?

4. Do you know any other coun-  
tries if so make circles.

4. What are the people called who  
live in the city you named?

4. Draw two circles one for  
the country and the other  
for the city.

5. If question (4) is yes  
how do you know?

5. Are they citizens of both the  
country and the capital?

5. What is the nationality of  
one of the countries named?

6. Are there any differences  
between the people of other  
countries and United States?

6. Have you heard of foreigners?

6. What is the nationality of  
people in the city named in  
question (2)?

7. If question (6) is yes, then  
what is the difference?

7. Are they good or bad?

7. Are the people of the city  
any other nationality?

8. Are there any other places in  
which people live?

8. How do you know?

8. Are all foreign countries  
the same size?



Age (6 - 7)

Age (8 - 10)

Age (11 - 12)

Cognitive and Affective Understanding of Others (other than United States Citizens).

- |                                                                    |                                                              |                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. What is a person called when he lives in another country?       | 1. What is a person called when he lives in another country? | 1. Do you know what a foreigner is?                            |
| 2. Have you ever seen a person from another country?               | 2. What nationality are you?                                 | 2. What is your nationality?                                   |
| 3. If so how did you know they were from another country?          | 3. Are you a foreigner?                                      | 3. Could you become a foreigner?                               |
| 4. If you were traveling in Canada would you be a foreigner?       | 4. Is a Canadian a foreigner?                                | 4. Could you be a foreigner and still be in the United States? |
| 5. Would a Canadian traveling in the United States be a foreigner? | 5. Is a Canadian a foreigner in Canada?                      | 5. Would you be a foreigner in Canada?                         |
| 6. Would a Canadian traveling in Canada be a foreigner?            | 6. Is a American a foreigner in North Dakota?                | 6. Is a Canadian a foreigner in Canada?                        |
| 7. Is a person from the next town (named) a foreigner?             | 7. Is a Canadian a foreigner if he is in the United States?  | 7. Is a Canadian a foreigner in the United States?             |
|                                                                    | 8. If he is not a foreigner what is he?                      |                                                                |
|                                                                    | 9. Can an American become a foreigner?                       |                                                                |

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Affective Motivation Toward Spatial Discrimination

- |                                                                       |                                                                       |                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. If you were born without a country, what country would you choose? | 1. If you were born without a country, what country would you choose? | 1. If you were born without a country, what country would you choose? |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|

Age (6 - 7)

2. Why

3. If I asked the same question  
to a young Canadian what  
answer would I get?

Age (8 - 10)

2. Why

3. If I asked the same question  
to a young Canadian what  
answer would I get?

Age (11 - 12)

2. Why

3. If I asked the same question  
to a young Canadian what  
answer would I get?



APPENDIX B

# THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONALISM IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN OF SWITZERLAND

Age (6 - 7)

Age (8 - 10)

Age (11 - 12)

## Cognitive Development of the Idea of Homeland

- |                                                           |                                                           |                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Have you heard of Switzerland?                         | 1. What is Switzerland?                                   | 1. What is Switzerland?                                   |
| 2. What is it?                                            | 2. And Geneva?                                            | 2. And Geneva?                                            |
| 3. Where is this country?                                 | 3. Where is Geneva?                                       | 3. Where is Geneva?                                       |
| 4. Is it near or far from here?                           | 4. Draw a circle for Geneva and a circle for Switzerland. | 4. Draw a circle for Geneva and a circle for Switzerland. |
| 5. What is Geneva?                                        | 5. What nationality are you?                              | 5. What is your nationality?                              |
| 6. Where is Geneva?                                       | 6. How is that?                                           | 6. How is that?                                           |
| 7. Draw a circle for Geneva and a circle for Switzerland. | 7. You're Genevese too?                                   | 7. Are you Genevese as well?                              |
| 8. Are you Swiss?                                         | 8. Why not?                                               | 8. Then you are two things at once?                       |
| 9. And are you Genevese?                                  |                                                           |                                                           |

## Affective Development of the Idea of Homeland

- |                                           |                                           |                                           |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 1. What country do you like? Explain why. | 1. What country do you like? Explain why? | 1. What country do you like? Explain why. |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|

## The Reaction of Children Toward Countries Other Than Their Own

- |                                     |                                  |                                       |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Do you know any other countries? | 1. Have you heard of foreigners? | 1. Do you know any foreign countries? |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|



Age (6 - 7)

2. Are there any people who do not live in Geneva?
3. How do you know?
4. Are there people who do not live in either the Diablerts or Switzerland?
5. Is there any difference between the people of Switzerland and other people?
6. Why? The people who don't live in Geneva are nicer than those who do?
7. Are there any differences between countries?

Age (8 - 10)

2. Are there any differences between these foreigners?
3. What is the difference?
4. How do you know?
5. And what do you think of the French?
6. Have been to France?
7. Then how do you know that you have told us?

Age (11 - 12)

2. And any foreign cities?
3. Where is this city?
4. And what is the nationality of the people who live in Paris?
5. And what else?
6. But do all these differences have any effect on the people?

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Cognitive and Affective Understanding of Others (other than Swiss citizens).

- |                                                                  |                                            |                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. What is a foreigner?                                          | 1. What nationality have you?              | 1. Do you know what a foreigner is?   |
| 2. Have you ever seen any?                                       | 2. And what are you in Switzerland?        | 2. Could you become a foreigner?      |
| 3. If you were traveling in France could you become a foreigner? | 3. Is he a foreigner?                      | 3. What are you if you go to France?  |
| 4. Could a Frenchman be a foreigner?                             | 4. And what is a Swiss who goes to France? | 4. And what is a Frenchman in France? |

Age (6 - 7)

5. And a Frenchman who stays in France?
6. And is a person from Lausanne a foreigner?

Age (8 - 10)

5. And what is a Frenchman?
6. And what is he if he comes to Switzerland?
7. What is a Frenchman living in France?

Age (11 - 12)

5. And what if he comes to Switzerland?
6. What is a Frenchman living in France?

Affective motivation Toward Spatial Discrimination

1. If you were born without a country, what country would you choose?
2. Why
3. If I asked a little French boy the same question what answer would I get?

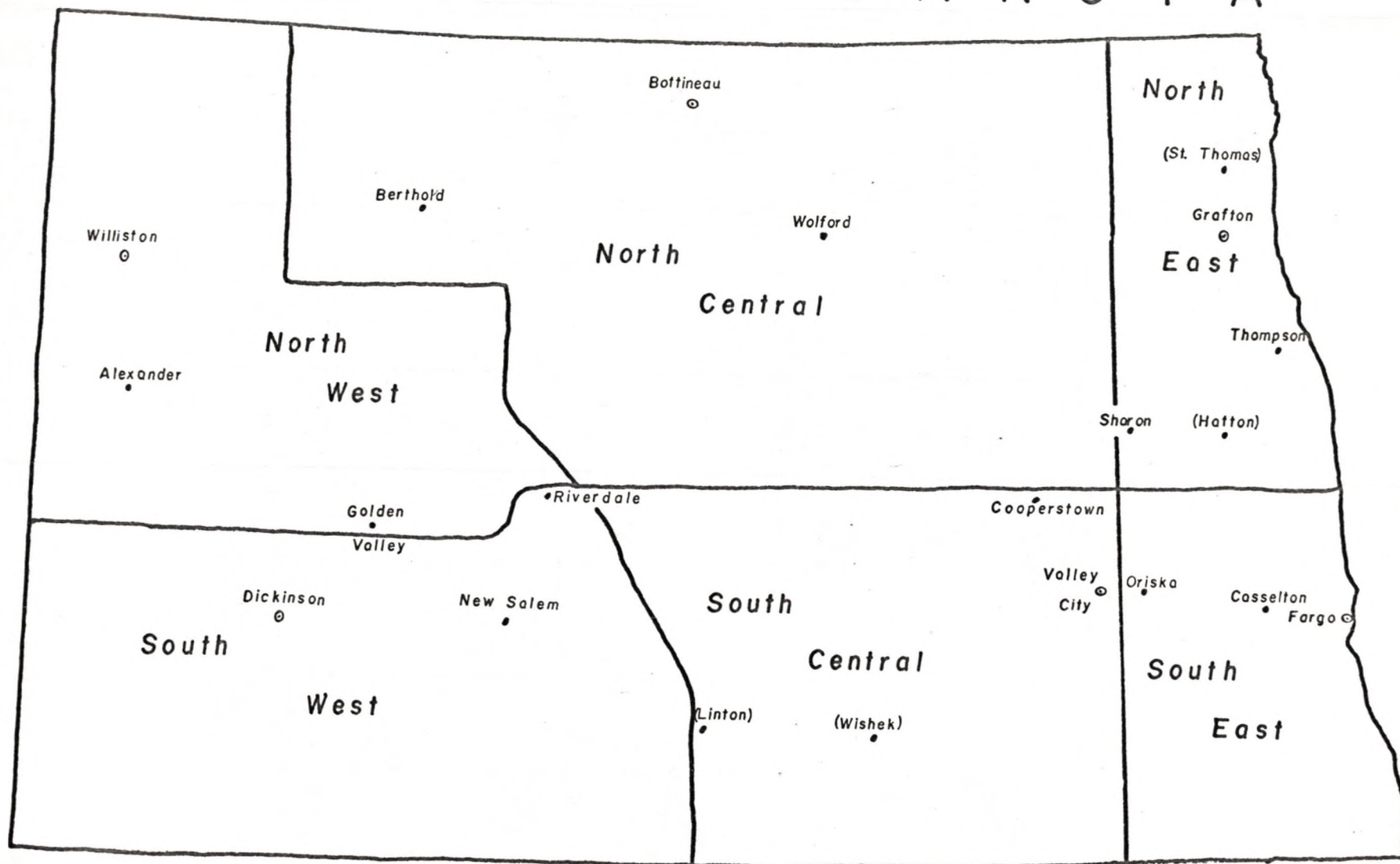
1. If you were born without a country, what country would you choose?
2. Why
3. If I asked a little French boy the same question what answer would I get?

1. If you were born without a country, what country would you choose?
2. Why
3. If I asked a French boy the same question what answer would I get?



# NORTH

# DAKOTA



95

10 0 10 20  
scale miles

○ urban ( ) homogeneous ethnic community

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